MAR. 30-31, 2006

Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association

Executive Notes

Your Provincial Executive Council met in St. John's on **March 30** and Joint Council (Branch Presidents and Provincial Executive) met on **March 31**. This issue of *Executive Notes* is a summary of major discussions and decisions that occurred at these meetings.

For further information contact any member of Provincial Executive or the staff person as indicated.

President's Report

Since the last meeting of Provincial Executive the President has continued visiting schools and teachers throughout the province. Besides meetings and activities in his role as President, he has also attended the Education Week Opening Ceremonies in Rushoon, attended the Speech from the Throne and several banquets for retiring teachers. His activities in the media have been numerous on issues of violence in schools, the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), current morale of teachers, Eastern School District's multi-year plan, Speech from the Throne and the Provincial budget, as well as teacher assignments in schools undergoing amalgamation.

For further information contact Kevin Foley, President.

Substitute Teachers Committee

The first meeting of the Substitute Teachers Committee took place in early March where the committee reviewed the report and recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee on Substitute Teachers. The committee reviewed its Terms of Reference, brainstormed on concerns and issues of substitute teachers in the areas of collective bargaining, school issues, and their roles within the board and NLTA structures. The decision was made to send a questionnaire to substitute teachers to find out their concerns, possible solutions to their concerns, and ways to achieve improvements and/or changes. The committee is scheduled to meet again in early April.

For further information contact Jim Dinn, Chairperson, Substitute Teachers Committee, or Perry Downey, Benefits and Economic Services Division.

Ad Hoc Committee on SIC Restructuring

This committee is now in the finishing stages of its mandate with its final major focus to finalize policy and to determine criteria and viability requirements for specialized councils. The committee recommended that the revised policy governing Special Interest Councils of the NLTA be adopted. This recommendation was approved by Provincial Executive.

For further information contact Bill Chaisson, Chairperson, Ad Hoc Committee on Special Interest Council Restructuring, or René Wicks, Professional Development Division.

Internal Review of NLTA's Programs and Services

At the 2005 BGM the following motion was carried: *That an internal/external review be conducted on all aspects of the NLTA operations in order to develop a strategic plan.* At the January meeting of Provincial Executive an internal analysis of all Association programs and services was presented to Executive for their review and feedback. Based on this information, the following motion was approved by Executive: *That NLTA staff will investigate with other teacher unions/associations in Canada the options available to the NLTA for conducting a review of NLTA programs and services.* Based on this motion, the CTF affiliate teacher organizations across Canada were contacted with a request for information on any activity they may have undertaken in similar circumstances in the past. From the information received, the use of an external reviewer to carry out a review of programs and service delivery was seen to be of questionable value and expensive. This information was presented to Provincial Executive and Joint Council. Executive will further consider this BGM motion at its June meeting.

For further information contact Edward Hancock, Executive Director.

Business from Standing Committees

Table Officers

- The proposed guidelines and procedures for the School Administrators' Professional Development Fund were accepted as presented.

  For further information contact Kevin Foley, President, or René Wicks, Professional Development Division.
- The proposed policy on Negotiating Team for Provincial Negotiations was accepted as presented.

  For further information contact Kevin Foley, President or Lloyd Hobbs, Assistant Executive Director.
- The proposed policy on Scent-Sensitive Workplace was accepted as presented.

  For further information contact Edward Hancock, Executive Director.

Membership Benefits and Services Committee

- The NLTA will conduct a survey of teachers who have had a student intern this year or in the past two years to ascertain: if cooperating teachers are aware of the $300 stipend paid to schools by MUN for taking student interns; if cooperating teachers are receiving any portion of the stipend; and if cooperating teachers are receiving part of the stipend, how much.
- The kilometer rate for pre-retirement seminars will be increased from $.064 per kilometer to $0.12 per kilometer and the policy on Pre-Retirement counseling will be amended accordingly.

(see over)

- Seven pre-retirement seminars will be held in accordance with Association policy during the fall of 2006 in the following locations: Corner Brook, Gander, Grand Falls-Windsor, Stephenville, and three in St. John's. The dates and sites will be determined by the Benefits and Economic Services Division, subject to hotel and presenter availability. Consideration will be given to combining seminars depending on registration numbers.
- Fred Wood of St. John's will be recipient of the Bancroft Award for 2006.
- Philip Wood of Bay Roberts will be recipient of the Special Recognition Award for 2006.

For further information contact Edward Moore, Chairperson, Membership Benefits and Services Committee, or Stefanie Tuff, Benefits and Economic Services Division.

Professional Issues Committee

- Mary Dinn will be the recipient of the Barnes Award for 2006.

  For further information contact Lily Cole, Chairperson, Professional Issues Committee, or Beverley Park or René Wicks, Professional Development Division

JOINT COUNCIL

Association Priorities

A detailed review of the Association priorities for 2006-07 was presented to Joint Council. The NLTA administrative staff updated Provincial Executive and Branch Presidents on various elements of the priorities including objectives, timelines and action updates. The priorities are: quality of teachers' work life/contract negotiations; membership awareness; and professionalism/accountability.

For further information contact Kevin Foley, President, or Edward Hancock, Executive Director.

Collective Bargaining

A presentation was made to Joint Council by Lloyd Hobbs, Chief Negotiator, on the status of negotiations. The details of the recent Memorandum of Agreement were reviewed with Joint Council as well as the announcements in the Speech from the Throne and the Provincial Budget. An update on the opening proposals was also provided which included a review of issues not included in the MOA, and the tentatively scheduled dates for further meetings.

Small group discussions also took place led by staff consultant Perry Downey, where Branch Presidents had the opportunity to provide input into priorities for the remainder of issues to be negotiated, the Pathways review process, and the teacher allocation formula review process.

For further information contact Sean Noah, Vice-President, or Lloyd Hobbs or Perry Downey, Benefits and Economic Services Division.

Group Insurance Renewals

Don Ash, Administrative Officer in the Benefits and Economic Services Division, made a presentation to Joint Council on Group Insurance premium changes. A review of recent decisions by Group Insurance Trustees was presented as well as actual changes in teacher premiums. The combined impact of the changes in group insurance premiums as a result of the Memorandum of Agreement and the April renewal will be an overall reduction in total premiums paid by most teachers per pay period.

For further information contact Bill Chaisson, Chairperson, Group Insurance Trustees, or Don Ash, Benefits and Economic Services Division.

Teacher Wellness Initiatives

Claudette Coombs and Marie Wall, Employee Assistance Program Coordinators, made a presentation to Joint Council on teacher wellness initiatives within the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). The wellness component of the EAP offers a variety of services to individual teachers or teacher groups, and is designed to give teachers a foundation to achieve optimal health through skills enhancement and support for healthy lifestyle choices.

For further information contact Claudette Coombs or Marie Wall, EAP Coordinators, Benefits and Economic Services Division.

Teacher Professional Development

A presentation on various Professional Development initiatives was made to Joint Council by Alex Hickey, Coordinator of the Virtual Teacher Centre and Professional Development Officers René Wicks and Beverley Park. Part of the presentation involved collecting information on professional development opportunities currently being utilized by teachers.

For further information contact Alex Hickey, VTC, or Beverley Park or René Wicks, Professional Development Division.

Discussion Topics

The following topics were reviewed by Provincial Executive and/or Joint Council for follow-up or future direction: parent-teacher interview time; school representative seminars; health insurance premiums for retired teachers; filling vacant positions; supervision; school-based/board-based committees; security of teachers/school violence; electronic reporting; income tax; new allocation formula; and membership awareness.

Next Meeting

The next regular meeting of Provincial Executive is scheduled for **June 2-3, 2006** in St. John's.

For further information contact Kevin Foley, President, or Edward Hancock, Executive Director.